

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SP-02 USIA-15 AID-05 EB-08
NSC-05 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 IGA-02 DHA-02
ORM-02 /087 W

-----041846Z 024327 /41

P 041316Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0413

UNCLAS LISBON 1723

FOR EUR/WE SMITH

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP PINR PO
SUBJ: VISIT OF EMIGRATION STATE SECRETARY JOAO LIMA

REF: (A) SMITH/MELTON TELCON OF MARCH 3,
(B) LISBON 862,
(C) 76 LISBON A-351,
(D) 76 LISBON 7768

SUMMARY: IN CONNECTION WITH VISIT OF EMIGRATION STATE
SECRETARY JOAO LIMA TO U.S. INFORMATION FOLLOWS ON RETURNEES,
GOP AND U.S. ASSISTANCE TO RETURNEES, AND PORTUGUESE
EMIGRATION. END SUMMARY.

1. RETURNEES: THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION UPDATES REFS C
AND D.

-- RETURNEE CENSUS: THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR RETURNEES
PROVIDED US WITH THE FOLLOWING DATA FROM A CENSUS OF
RETURNEES CONDUCTED IN DEC 1976:

-- TOTAL RETURNEES: 438,000
-- UNEMPLOYED RETURNEES: 113,007

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-- UNEMPLOYED RETURNEES RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT
BENEFITS: 96,674
-- RETURNEES INTERESTED IN EMIGRATION: 46,467.

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER ESTIMATED THAT THE CENSUS
UNDERCOUNTS THE NUMBER OF RETURNEES BY 10-15 PERCENT.
WE BELIEVE THAT THE CENSUS ALSO LEFT OUT AN ADDITIONAL

NUMBER OF WELL-INTEGRATED RETURNEES WHO DID NOT REGISTER.
THUS, TOTAL NUMBER OF RETURNEES MAY BE CLOSE TO THE
600,000 FIGURE USED IN REF C.

2. GOP PROGRAMS: THE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE OF OVER 25 PERCENT
IN CENSUS DATA REFLECTS THE FACT THAT A LARGE NUMBER
OF RETURNEES HAVE NOT BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE PORTUGUESE
ECONOMY. THE GOP IS COUNTING HEAVILY ON A SMALL LOAN PROGRAM
TO RETURNEES TO CREATE ADDITIONAL JOBS.
THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES REPORTED MARCH 1
THAT 1,300 LOANS FOR A TOTAL OF 30 MILLION DOLLARS
ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION. THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HAS
SOUGHT TO RETURN MANY OF THE NORMAL RETURNEE RELIEF
PROGRAMS TO THE CONCERNED GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.
THE GOVERNMENT CEASED TO GIVE REFUGEE BENEFITS TO
THOSE RETURNING FROM FORMER COLONIES AFTER NOV 30,
1976 ALTHOUGH THE ESTIMATED 100 PER DAY STILL
RETURNING FROM MOZAMBIQUE DO RECEIVE PRIVATE AGENCY
RELIEF.

3. U.S. ASSISTANCE: TO UPDATE INFORMATION IN REF D,
ALL OF THE 33.5 MILLION DOLLARS ALLOCATED TO THE GOP
FOR GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED RELIEF PROGRAMS AND NEARLY
HALF OF THE 1.5 MILLION DOLLARS EARMARKED FOR
DISTRIBUTION THROUGH PRIVATE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES HAS
NOW BEEN DISBURSED.

4. EMIGRATION: SINCE OCTOBER 1976, THE STATE SECRETARY
FOR EMIGRATION HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR
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ALL EMIGRATION, INCLUDING REFUGEE EMIGRATION. IN FACT,
PORTUGAL HAS HAD LITTLE SUCCESS IN OBTAINING EMIGRATION
OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEES. IN A MARCH 2 PRESS
INTERVIEW, EMIGRATION STATE SECRETARY JOAO LIMA:
-- POINTED TO VENEZUELA, AUSTRALIA, AND THE UNITED
STATES AS POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS OF PORTUGUESE EMIGRANTS;
-- SAID HE WOULD PROPOSE THAT THE GOP PAY TRANSPORTATION
AND SETTLEMENT SUBSIDIES TO IMPOVERISHED EMIGRANTS;
-- EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT "THE NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION
MIGHT PROVIDE THE OPENINGS" FOR ADDITIONAL EMIGRANTS, "AS
THE U.S. HAS DONE FOR OTHER NATIONS IN CRISIS."

5. ICEM: THE INTER-GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN MIGRATION
(ICEM), THROUGH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GOP, HAS BEEN
ASSISTING WITH THE EMIGRATION OF APPROXIMATELY 100
PORTUGUESE (PRINCIPALLY RETURNEES) PER MONTH TO
VENEZUELA, CANADA, AND AUSTRALIA. ICEM HAS
ALSO PROVIDED SOME ASSISTANCE TO THOSE QUALIFYING FOR
EMIGRATION TO THE U.S.

6. U.S. EMIGRATION: IN ORDER FOR A SIZEABLE NUMBER OF
PORTUGUESE RETURNEES TO QUALIFY FOR U.S. IMMIGRATION,
THEY WILL REQUIRE ORGANIZED ASSISTANCE WITH "LABOR CERTIFICATIONS"
FROM THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNITIES IN THE U.S.
THE ONLY ORGANIZATION THAT HAS SHOWN INTEREST IN ORGANIZING
SUCH ASSISTANCE IS THE MIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICES
IN THE UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE.
THE DIRECTOR OF THIS SERVICE, JOHN E. MCCARTHY, CALLED AT THE
EMBASSY FEB 23 AND CONFIRMED HIS ORGANIZATION'S CONTINUING
INTEREST IN SUCH A PROGRAM. MR. MCCARTHY'S OFFICE IS AT
1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W., WASHINGTON, 659-6625.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, CENSUS, REPATRIATION, VISITS, EMIGRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LISBON01723
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770075-0672
Format: TEL
From: LISBON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770393/aaaaddxn.tel
Line Count: 129
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fcc1adbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 LISBON 862, 76 LISBON A-351, 76 LISBON 7768
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3209258
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF EMIGRATION STATE SECRETARY JOAO LIMA
TAGS: OVIP, PINR, PO, US, (LIMA, JOAO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fcc1adbd-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009